

In the years to come, I sincerely hope that Lebanon Township will continue to build on the foundations of the past to ensure a happy and prosperous future for all its residents.

I offer my congratulations and best wishes to Mayor Art Gerlich and the Township Committee. It is my honor to have this municipality with the boundaries of my district. And it is my good fortune to be able to participate in its very special anniversary.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. XAVIER BECERRA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 24, 1998

Mr. BECERRA. Mr. Speaker, due to a medical emergency, I missed 11 votes which occurred between January 27, 1998 and February 5, 1998. Had I been present, I would have voted as follows:

Roll call Vote number 1—Present, 2—No, 3—No, 4—Yes, 5—Yes, 6—No, 7—No, 8—No, 9—No, 10—Yes, 11—Present.

A TRIBUTE TO EMPRESS CASINO JOLIET

HON. JERRY WELLER

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 24, 1998

Mr. WELLER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Empress Casino Joliet, a tremendous corporate citizen in Joliet, Illinois as it has been named the 1998 Salute to Industry Award recipient by the Joliet Region Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

From its opening day in June of 1992, the Empress Casino has made a dramatic impact on the economic landscapes of Joliet, Will County and the State of Illinois. In a region where many hard working people have struggled to find consistent and reliable employment, the Empress Casino has risen to become Will County's sixth largest employer, keeping 1600 local employees on its \$45 million annual payroll. During its first 14 days of operation, the Empress Casino welcomed over 50,000 people and has currently hosted over 21 million guests, an incredible achievement for less than six years of operations.

Understanding how local support is a major factor to the Empress Casino's success, the owners have made a substantial commitment to support the community through charitable contributions. In just one year, the Empress Casino has donated nearly \$300,000 to organizations able to assist people in need. Further emphasizing its commitment to boosting the local economy, the Empress reinvests well over \$9 million each year purchasing supplies, products, and services from local businesses. The City of Joliet and the State of Illinois have received substantial benefits from the Empress Casino's success, including \$77 million and \$191 million of tax revenue, respectively.

Mr. Speaker, I am happy to join the Joliet Region Chamber of Commerce as we recognize the Empress Casino Joliet as an out-

standing corporate citizen in Joliet and Will County, Illinois. I applaud the owners and employees of the Empress Casino for their dedication made to our community and wish them the best in the future.

TRIBUTE TO LOUIS WALSH, "IRISHMAN OF THE YEAR"

HON. TOM LANTOS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 24, 1998

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Mr. Louis Walsh, who was honored on Friday, February 20, as "Irishman of the Year" by the Denver Chapter of the Ancient Order of Hibernians. I invite my colleagues to join me in extending congratulations to Mr. Walsh on his receiving this outstanding and appropriate honor.

Mr. Speaker, there are many characteristics which we associate with the Irish—loyalty, perseverance, humor, trustworthiness, generosity, hospitality. These are especially true of Louis Walsh. He has also been blessed with an unmistakable Irish wit. For all intents and purposes, his home is your home. But Lou can also be very demanding—he expects the best from all of his friends and colleagues, and in doing so he has contributed markedly to improving the quality of their lives.

Lou appreciates the best of everything, whether it be music, drink, entertainment or, most important of all, friendship and loyalty. He appreciates the good life all the more for having starting out in humble circumstances. Lou was born on March 5, 1928, in Curry, County Sligo, Ireland, one of ten children. Life was simple and full of hard work, but that did not stop Lou from riding ten miles on his bike to get to a dance, arriving home in time to sleep for but an hour before morning chores. But he had much longer journeys in his future.

Lou attended St. Nathy's College before traveling to England to teach school at Rodbourne College. Soon afterwards, with the assistance of his brother Matt, he made the decision to cross the Atlantic and emigrate to America. Lou initially settled in Chicago and continued his education, attending Peter Shannon's School of Accounting. Mr. Shannon, astutely noting his numerous abilities, employed Lou after his completion of the course. Lou has been everlastingly grateful to Mr. Shannon for believing in him from the start and for assisting him in every possible way. Lou has tried to be similarly inspiring and helpful to others throughout the course of his life.

After five years of work for Mr. Shannon and an additional two years of service as an Army medic during the Korean War, Lou's appreciation of nature and love of beauty prompted him to move to Colorado in 1961. He worked as an auditor for the State of Colorado for a dozen years, during which time he was involved in the creation of the Colorado lottery. Lou also started a real estate business, which proved both demanding and successful. Lou's philosophic foundation appeared on every one of his real estate signs: "Let Right Be Done." This outlook has reflected his approach towards his customers, his neighborhood and his family.

Lou's legacy is to be found in a myriad of activities, organizations and good deeds, most notably those within the Irish community. He was one of the founders of several significant Irish organizations, including The Emerald Athletic Club in Chicago, The Irish Fellowship Club of Colorado and The St. Patrick's Day Parade Committee, which has given rise to one of the most prominent St. Patrick's Day parades in the country. Louis love of Irish culture applies to Irish books (of which he has many), Irish newspapers and magazines (to which he still subscribes), Irish wolfhounds (of which he once had four), Morgan horses (of which he has two), and Irish Whiskey. He appetite for Irish music and entertainment has promoted him to develop and foster Irish concerts and special events, and he has long dreamed of the establishment of an Irish cultural center in Denver. His concern for young people inspired him to organize a summer program in Colorado for Irish students. Finally, Lou's strong and unabated commitment to his church and homeland once gave him the opportunity to host the highest cleric in Ireland, Cardinal O'Faich.

While Lou's devotion to the Irish community is legendary, his greatest passion is for his family: Ann, his extraordinary wife and partner in work as well as in life, son Louis, Jr., who has followed his proud father in his interest in real estate, and innumerable other relatives by blood or friendship whose lives have been touched by his compassion and enthusiasm.

Mr. Speaker, it is time, to paraphrase Lou, to see to it that Right Be Done. I ask my colleagues to join me in expressing appreciation for a fine man and a true Irishman, Mr. Louis Walsh.

TRIBUTE TO THE ST. LOUIS SMALL BUSINESS MONTHLY

HON. JAMES M. TALENT

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 24, 1998

Mr. TALENT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the St. Louis Small Business Monthly. This month, the St. Louis Small Business Monthly celebrates its tenth anniversary.

Mr. Speaker, the St. Louis Small Business Monthly is more than just a newspaper. It is a valuable networking tool, resource center, and clearinghouse for all things small business. It's a resource by and for the small business owner; it is invaluable to this important community.

Small businesses are not just the engine of our economy, they are the backbones of our communities. The St. Louis Small Business Monthly was founded to support the spirit of entrepreneur and recognizes the vitality and importance of the growth and success of this community. It fills a need in the community and fills it well.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like you to join me in congratulating editor Judy Meador, co-founders Katie Muchnick and Bill Schneider, and the rest of the staff at the St. Louis Small Business Monthly for a terrific first ten years and to its long and prosperous future.